

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 846
By Fitzhugh

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend the members of the 230th
Area Support Group of the Tennessee Army
National Guard for their meritorious service in
support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

WHEREAS, our Nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, many fine and honorable traditions have arisen from the deep wellspring of honor and bravery possessed by Tennesseans, but there is no finer tradition than that which gave Tennessee its nickname; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of the "Volunteer State" have, throughout the years, willingly forsaken the comforts and securities of inaction by taking up arms against the enemies of this great Nation, risking their lives and leaving their loved ones behind to honorably safeguard the freedoms and liberties guaranteed to all citizens of these United States and vanquishing those who threaten our way of life; and

WHEREAS, established in 1887 by an act of the 45th General Assembly, the Tennessee Army National Guard is a dedicated collection of the finest men and women this State has to offer. Always vigilant and prepared for duty, the Tennessee Army National Guard has proven time and again its ability to protect fellow Tennesseans and Americans and those around the world in need of aid; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Tennessee Army National Guard selflessly serve with courage and gallantry, and they deserve to be recognized for heroism in the line of duty and model citizenship in our American society; and

WHEREAS, the 230th Area Support Group (ASG), a major command at the Tennessee Army National Guard headquartered in Dyersburg, was mobilized on August 10, 2004, for a one-year deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The unit was commanded by Colonel Robert Nelson and the Command Sergeant was CSM William M. Bledsoe; and

WHEREAS, after a few weeks of preparation in Tennessee, the unit traveled to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, for certification and integration into the Iraqi theater of war. The 230th ASG left Fort Bragg on September 23, 2004, and arrived at Kuwait City on September 24th; and

WHEREAS, while en route to Iraq, the planes landed at Bangor, Maine, and the soldiers were visited by President George W. Bush. He shook hands with every member of the unit and wished them all a safe trip and the best of luck; and

WHEREAS, the unit was based in Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Once there, the unit did not operate as a separate entity. 230th ASG personnel were dispersed among the various units comprising the 377th Theater Support Command (TSC). This unit was commanded by Major General (MG) Paul Mock of the United States Army Reserve out of the State of California. Colonel Nelson was designated the Deputy Commander of the 337th. Command Sergeant Major Bledsoe later became the Garrison Command Sergeant Major; and

WHEREAS, the unit's mission in conjunction with the 337th consisted of reception, staging, onward movement, and integration of both incoming personnel and equipment. The same functions were performed for personnel returning to the United States; and

WHEREAS, the 230th ASG facilitated the second largest rotation of United States troops since World War II and created a world-class production line operation that fabricated and installed Level III "up armor" kits on more than 6,000 wheeled and tracked vehicles, an effort that captured national attention; and

WHEREAS, the 230th ASG reviewed and approved more than eight billion dollars in contracted supplies and services, and supervised and completed more than twenty million dollars in troop and contracted construction in Iraq and Kuwait, including a United States postal terminal, force protection structures, roads, helipads, and tactical petroleum terminals; and

WHEREAS, the 230th Area Support Group planned and directed the movement of 1,700 trucks each day while in the Middle East, moving thirty-four combat brigades to and from their Iraqi-based operating areas; and

WHEREAS, the 230th operated Camp Navistar, the world's largest truck stop, trailer transfer point, and final safe-haven prior to crossing the Kuwait/Iraq international border, and planned and managed the "Iraqi Express," a daily secure movement of trucks laden with high priority supplies into Iraq. They managed the movement of more than one million gallons of fuel per day into Iraq; and

WHEREAS, the 230th ASG managed movement of rations for more than ninety-seven billion meals for soldiers and provided contract supervision for thirteen dining facilities in Kuwait, which prepared and served more than thirteen million meals; and

WHEREAS, in partnership with the United States Navy and Kuwaiti counterparts, the members of the 230th ASG planned and managed the off-loading of theater ammunition for numerous merchant marine ocean vessels; and

WHEREAS, the 230th ASG fulfilled the unfortunate, but necessary, act of honoring our fallen comrades throughout the theater by managing a zero defect mortuary affairs operation; and

WHEREAS, the unit returned to Fort Bragg for out-processing on August 15, 2005, and were home on the following Wednesday. Happily, the 230th ASG suffered no casualties and everyone returned safe and sound; and

WHEREAS, throughout their exemplary service in Iraq, the men and women of the 230th ASG proudly carried forward and enhanced this State's reputation for bravery and volunteerism as they battled terrorism and supported the establishment of democratic principles of government; and

WHEREAS, the outstanding men and women of the 230th Area Support Group performed above and beyond both the call of duty and their "Warrior Ethos," which states in part, "I will always place the mission first. I will not accept defeat. I will never quit. I will not leave a fallen comrade. I volunteer sir!"; and

WHEREAS, the members of the 230th ASG have proudly upheld the ideal of the citizen-soldier, an essential tradition of American society, and their courageous service stands as an enduring example of all the characteristics that have ensured the continued freedom of our Nation and the preservation of its ideals over the course of our history; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this General Assembly honor the brave and noble men and women of the 230th Area Support Group of the Tennessee Army National Guard, as they have made untold and innumerable personal sacrifices to preserve the liberties we enjoy today and will continue to cherish for generations to come; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend the members of the 230th Area Support Group of the Tennessee Army National Guard for their meritorious service in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we applaud the return of the 230th Area Support Group to American soil, and we express our deepest gratitude for the tremendous sacrifices these valiant soldiers so selflessly made to secure the blessings of liberty for the people of this great Nation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.